

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2149

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KAMPALA 0971

USIA FOR IAA

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT PGOV UG

SUBJ: ACTING EDUCATION MINISTER'S VIEWS ON INTERNAL UGANDAN
SITUATION

SUMMARY: PERMSEC AND ACTING MINISTER OF EDUCATION, ADIMOLA, IN ACCEPTING 8,000 DONATED BOOKS FROM PAO, APPARENTLY USED OCCASION TO MAKE SURE U. S. KNOWS THAT AMIN ALONE RULES UGANDA AND THAT CABINET AND DEFENSE COUNCIL ARE, RESPECTIVELY, "NOTHING" AND "RUBBER STAMP." END SUMMARY.

1. PAO MET MARCH 15 WITH ANDREW ADIMOLA, PERMSEC AND ACTING MINISTER OF EDUCATION, TO PRESENT "TO UGANDAN STUDENTS" 8,000 NEWLY RECEIVED, WELL SELECTED DONATED BOOKS FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS. ADIMOLA, A LEADER GRANTEE IN 1970, WAS IMPRESSED AND THANKFUL BUT MADE A POINT OF LETTING PAO KNOW THAT HE ACCEPTED GIFT FOR PEOPLE AS OPPOSED TO GOU.

2. ACTING MINISTER'S OUTER OFFICE WAS FILLED WITH OTHERS WAITING TO SEE HIM, BUT PAO WAS USHERED INTO HIS PRIVATE OFFICE AT ONCE AND WITH MUCH COURTESY. SINCE APPOINTMENT TO SEE HIM WAS MADE DAY IN ADVANCE, ADIMOLA OBVIOUSLY WAS PREPARED NOT ONLY TO ACCEPT BOOKS BUT ALSO TO USE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE USG INFORMATION ON CURRENT SITUATION IN UGANDA.

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TELEPHONE CALLS INTERRUPTED HIM CONSTANTLY DURING FIRST FEW MINUTES, BUT HE SOON TOLD SECRETARY TO STOP THEM.

3. AFTER ACCEPTING TOKEN BOOKS, ADIMOLA LEANED FORWARD IN CHAIR, SAID, " WE NEED THESE BOOKS. WE' LL USE THEM SOME DAY, BUT I' M AFRAID WE' LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR LAW AND ORDER TO BE ESTABLISHED. WE MUST BE ALLOWED TO GO TO WORK AND DEVELOP UGANDA." ASKED IF HE THOUGHT THIS COULD HAPPEN SOON, HE SAID NOT UNTIL AFTER THE SOLDIERS HAD BEEN ORDERED BACK TO AND KEPT IN THEIR BARRACKS. " WE ALL LIVE IN FEAR," HE WENT ON. " THE PRESIDENT IS A SUSPICIOUS MAN. SUSPICION BREEDS FEAR. FEAR BREEDS. . ." AND HE SEARCHED FOR A WORD, "... SHALL WE SAY HARSHNESS? THE PRESIDENT TRUSTS NO MAN IN UGANDA. HE IS AFRAID OF EVERYONE WITH ANY AUTHORITY AT ALL, AND AS LONG AS HE IS AFRAID HE WILL BE BRUTAL. I SIT HERE BECAUSE I HAVE NINE CHILDREN. MY INVESTMENTS ARE HERE, NOT OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY. BESIDES, I LOVE UGANDA. I PREFER TO DIE HERE."

4. " DO YOU FEAR FOR YOUR OWN SECURITY?" PAO ASKED. " WHO DOESN' T IN UGANDA?" HE ANSWERED. " YOU KNOW YOU ARE NOT SPEAKING TO THE GOVERNMENT OF UGANDA WHEN YOU SPEAK WITH ME, BUT THE PEOPLE THINK THE CABINET IS THE GOVERNMENT. THE CABINET IS NOTHING. NOTHING. WE ARE GOING TO MEET TODAY ON THE REORGANIZATION OF THE UGANDAN GOVERNMENT. ALL OF US WILL SAY, ' SEPARATE THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE FROM MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS. LET CIVILIANS RULE.' THE PRESIDENT WILL SAY NOTHING. HE WILL LEAVE THE MEETING, GO TO DEFENSE COUNCIL AND THEN ANNOUNCE TO PUBLIC HE HAS BEEN ORDERED TO DO WHATEVER HE HAS DECIDED TO DO. HE DOES NOT ACCEPT ADVICE."

5. DEFENSE COUNCIL, ADIMOLA SAID LAUGHINGLY, IS A " RUBBER STAMP." WHO ARE ITS MEMBERS? " ANY OFFICERS HANDY," HE SAID. " SOME ARE ALWAYS ON HAND, OF COURSE, BUT DON' T THINK ANY OFFICER TELLS AMIN WHAT TO DO."

6. CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO DEPARTING UGANDANS, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF CABINET RANK. HE SAID ALL CIVILIANS WOULD LEAVE IF POSSIBLE, " BECAUSE ONE CANNOT LIVE WITH FEAR." THE " REAL" LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION RUGUMAYO WAS COMPLETE DENUNCIATION OF AMIN AND MILITARY FORCE. LETTER WHICH APPEARED IN PRESS WAS " COOKED UP," HE SAID.
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" I KNOW. I SAW THE ORIGINAL WHEN I MET HIM (RUGUMAYO) IN

NAIROBI." ASKED IF KIBEDI WOULD RETURN, ACTING MINISTER SHRUGGED. " I WOULDN' T THINK SO. I THINK HE IS A PRETTY HONORABLE MAN."

7. IS THERE ANY HOPE THAT UGANDA WILL RETURN TO RULE OF LAW? IN ANSWER HE POINTED TO TODAY' S HEADLINE IN VOICE OF UGANDA: " AMERICAN- MADE PISTOL CAPTURED; ATTEMPT ON PRESIDENT' S LIFE FOILED." ADIMOLA SMILED AND TAPPED THE NEWSPAPER, " THIS IS HIS CONCERN. FEAR FOR HIS LIFE. HE DOESN' T CARE ABOUT LAW. HE KNOWS NOTHING OF LAW OR ANYTHING ELSE. HE JUST OPENS HIS MOUTH AND LETS WORDS COME OUT. ALL OF US WONDER WHO WRITES HIS SPEECHES AND LETTERS. THE MAN KNOWS NOTHING BUT FEAR. THAT' S WHY THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS FILLED WITH FEAR."

8. TELEPHONE CALL, APPARENTLY URGENT, INDICATED MINISTER WAS BEING CALLED TO MEETING. IN TAKING LEAVE, PAO ASSURED ACTING MINISTER OF U. S. FRIENDSHIP FOR UGANDAN PEOPLE AND OFFERED TO BE OF ANY PERSONAL HELP POSSIBLE. ADIMOLA SHOOK HIS HEAD, INDICATING PERHAPS THAT THERE WAS NOTHING ANYONE COULD DO. HE SAID, " I THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP. I ADMIRE YOUR COUNTRY; LET US HOPE THAT ALL OF US HAVE GOOD LUCK".
KEELEY

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